

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTO 04505 161944Z
ACTION ARA-14

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SUBJECT: GUZMAN, MAJLUTA SWORN IN

1. ANTONIO GUZMAN FERNANDEZ AND JACOBO MAJLUTA AZAR WERE
SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC AT
10:50 A.M. AUGUST 16, AS PROSCRIBED BY THE DOMINICAN
CONSTITUTION, BY THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
RAFAEL PERALTA.

2. GUZMAN BEGAN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS WITH A REMARKABLY
FRANK RECOUNTING OF RECENT POLITICAL EVENTS. HAVING KEPT
HIS COUNSEL AND REFRAINED FROM RESPONDING TO THE SERIES OF
PROVOCATIONS HE HAD ENDURED SINCE WINNING THE MAY 16
ELECTION, THE NEW PRESIDENT LET LOOSE A BLAST AT THE
"UNSCRUPULOUS" EMPLOYMENT BY THE OUTGOING GOVERNMENT OF ALL
THE RESOURCES OF THE STATE TO RE-ELECT PRESIDENT BALAGUER,
WHO SAT AT GUZMAN'S ELBOW THROUGHOUT THE HOUR-LONG SPEECH.

3. WITHOUT MENTIONING THE EX-PRESIDENT, GUZMAN REFERRED TO
BALAGUER'S EFFORTS TO IMPUGN THE ELECTORAL VICTORY OF THE
PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DOMINICANO (PRD) WITH FRAUD CHARGES
THAT PROVED GROUNDLESS. HE THEN ADVERTED TO THE "CAPRICIOUS"
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PAGE 02 SANTO 04505 161944Z

DECISION OF THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL BOARD (JCE) (DICTATED BY
BALAGUER ON JULY 7) THAT STRIPPED THE PRD OF CONTROL OF THE
SENATE, WHICH IT ALSO WON IN THE MAY 16 ELECTION. FINALLY,
HE MENTIONED THE CASCADE OF "INSTANT" LAWS (PASSED IN THE
LAST MONTH BY BALAGUER'S RUBBER-STAMP CONGRESS) WHICH GUZMAN
SAID WAS DESIGNED TO SLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENUINE
DEMOCRACY IN THIS COUNTRY.

4. THE KEYNOTE OF THE REST OF THE SPEECH WAS "INSTITUTIONAL-IZATION" OF DOMINICAN SOCIETY AND ITS POLITICAL SYSTEM, WHICH GUZMAN SAID HE INTENDS TO CONTINUE DESPITE ALL THE RECENT MANEUVERS TO FRUSTRATE HIM, BY STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE LAW AND THE CONSTITUTION. MEN PASS INTO HISTORY, HE SAID, BUT THE INSTITUTIONS THEY CREATE, IF SOUNDLY BASED, REMAIN. THE ONES THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HAS TODAY HAVE JUST PASSED THROUGHOUT A PROFOUND MORAL CRISIS, GUZMAN SAID. HE WAS REFERRING TO THE "ENORMOUS" CORRUPTION OF THE OUT-GOING GOVERNMENT MARKED BY THE UNCONTROLLED USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PRIVATE GAIN. WHILE THE RESOURCES OF THE NATION WERE CHanneLED INTO INFRASTRUCTURE (AND GRAFT) -- BALAGUER IS WIDELY CRITICIZED FOR EXCESSIVE PUBLIC WORKS SPENDING -- GUZMAN SAID THE HUMBLER CLASSES WERE NEGLECTED. THE LONG NEGLECT OF THE PEOPLE GUZMAN PROMISED TO REMEDY WITH INCREASED EMPHASIS ON PROGRAMS FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVED PUBLIC HEALTH AND BETTER EDUCATION. HONEST AND COMPETENT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS ANOTHER OBJECTIVE HE STRESSED, WHILE CALLING UPON THE MAIN OPPOSITION FORCE, BALAGUER'S REFORMISTA PARTY, TO COOPERATE IN REFORMING THE JUDICIARY, A LAME APPENDAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH THROUGHOUT BALAGUER'S 12 YEARS IN OFFICE.

5. AMONG GUZMAN'S PROMISES WHICH PROMPTED THE LOUDEST APPLAUSE WAS HIS COMMITMENT TO /INSTITUTIONALIZE" AGRARIAN REFORM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 SANTO 04505 161944Z

ALONG "SCIENTIFIC AND JUST" ORIENTATIONS -- INSTEAD OF GIVING OUT PARCELS OF LAND, AS WAS BALAGUER'S APPROACH, WITH NO SUBSEQUENT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OR FOLLOW-UP -- AND TO DO THE SAME THING WITH THE ARMED FORCES. SPEAKING AS "COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF" OF THE DOMINICAN MILITARY AND POLICE -- WHOSE GENERAL OFFICERS PACKED THE PODIUM AS IS CUSTOMARY WHEN BALAGUER APPEARS IN PUBLIC -- GUZMAN SAID HE WILL "ENFORCE" THEIR INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION, AND IMPROVE THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS, SO THEY CAN FULFILL THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATIONS AS GUARANTORS OF THE PUBLIC ORDER.

6. CALLING ON HIS POLITICAL ALLIES AND THE OPPOSITION AS WELL TO WORK WITH PATIENCE, HONESTY AND PATRIOTISM FOR THE GOOD OF THE NATION AS DISTINCT FROM THE PARTICULAR BENEFIT OF THE FEW, GUZMAN-THEN TURNED TO BALAGUER, SEATED AT HIS LEFT AND LOOKING MORE FRAIL THAN USUAL. HE SALUTED THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT FIRST FOR HIS ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORIC TRANSFER OF POWER WHICH HAD JUST TAKEN PLACE AND ONLY SECONDARILY FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION.

7. THE NEW PRESIDENT ENDED HIS SPEECH BY SALUTING THE MEN

AND WOMEN OF THE PRD, ITS LEADERSHIP, ITS CADRES AND ITS RANK
AND FILE, FOR THEIR HARD WORK IN CARRYING HIM TO VICTORY
AND, FINALLY, AFTER A GREAT STRUGGLE, TO THE PRESIDENCY OF
THE REPUBLIC.
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